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A very interesting exhibition is, or was lately, open on the Bouvelards, for the benefit of what may be termed an Artists' Fund Society, consisting of many of the best examples of the French school during the 17th and 18th centuries.

THE CRAYON.

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER, 1860.

Sketchings.

DOMESTIC ART GOSSIP.

ST. LOUIS.—The State of Missouri having resolved to erect a statue in honor of Thomas H. Benton, has awarded the commission to Miss Hosmer. The following letter conveys to the committee of the legislature the lady's acceptance of the task.

WATERTOWN, June 22, 1860.

GENTLEMEN: I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 15th instant, informing me that the execution of the bronze statue in memory of the late Colonel Benton, for the city of St. Louis, is intrusted to me. Such a tribute to his merit would demand the best acknowledgments of any artist, but in the present instance my most cordial thanks will but insufficiently convey to you a sense of the obligation under which I feel you have placed me.

I have reason to be grateful to you for this distinction, because I am a young artist, and though I may have given some evidence of skill in those of my statues which are now in your city, I could scarcely have hoped that their merit, whatever it may be, should have inspired the citizens of St. Louis to intrust me with a work whose chief characteristic must be the union of great intellectual power with manly strength.

But I have also reason to be grateful to you, because I am a woman, and, knowing what barriers must in the outset oppose all womanly efforts, I am indebted to the chivalry of the West, which has first overleaped them. I am not unmindful of the kind indulgence with which my works have been received, but I have sometimes thought that the critics might be more courteous than just, remembering from what hand they proceeded; but your kindness will now afford me ample opportunity of proving to what rank I am really entitled as an artist, unsheltered by their broad wings of compassion for the sex; for this work must be, as we understand the term, a *manly* work, and hence its merits alone must be my defence against the attacks of those who stand ready to resist any encroachments upon their self-appropriated sphere.

I utter these sentiments only to assure you that I am fully aware of the important results which to me, as an artist, wait on the issue of my labors, and hence that I shall spare no pains to produce a monument worthy of your city, and worthy of the statesman, who though dead, still speaks to you in language more eloquent and endearing than the happiest efforts in marble or bronze, of ever so cunning a workman.

It only remains for me to add, that as I shall visit St. Louis previous to my departure for Europe, further details may then be arranged. I have the honor to remain, gentlemen,

Respectfully yours, H. G. HOSMER.

To Messrs. J. B. Bryant, Wayman Crow, M. L. Linton, M.D., Committee.

NEWPORT, August 14th, 1860.

Dear Crayon:

When I left Boston some two weeks since, nearly all the studios there were closed for the summer, and their owners were pervading the wilds of Maine and other unfrequented places, in search of the picturesque. Mr. Ball, the sculptor, has moved into his new studio, and his former one has been taken by Mr. Ames, who has now a large, well lighted painting-room, and a

fine exhibition-room, which is well filled with his best pictures. Mr. Wight has gone to Europe, and is to be absent some time. Ball Hughes has recently completed a statuette, which is highly spoken of. Messrs. Chas. T. Barry and T. M. Johnson have both drawn crayon likenesses of Mr. Lincoln, the Republican nominee for the Presidency, which are being lithographed. Miss Ellen Robbins has received a munificent commission for a book of Autumn Leaves and Wild Flowers, which is to be carried to Rome, and Mr. Heade, of Providence, gives us occasional glimpses of flowers and trailing vines—such exquisite groups—that we are almost tempted to wish that he were less successful as a landscapist. So much for Boston. Here in Newport, "though fashion reigns supreme," there are several fine studios, and more than one well-known artist. Miss Sarah Clarke and Messrs. William Hunt, Joseph Ames, and Richard M. Staigg, reside here in summer, and Miss Harriet Hosmer and Miss Emma Stebbins are both in town, the guests of Mr. Crow, of St. Louis. Mr. Mozier, the sculptor, is also here for a few days, and the names of other artists are given as those of expected visitors. Since my last letter, Miss Hosmer has received from St. Louis a commission for a colossal statue of Thomas Hart Benton. It is to be done in bronze, and the price is ten thousand dollars, which I hope will remunerate the brave little sculptor for her labor. As this is to be the first public monument ever erected in that State, the compliment is no insignificant one. Miss Hosmer will visit St. Louis in September for the purpose of selecting a site for the statue, and also to collect materials to aid her in executing her great work. f.

It is not a matter of surprise that the European picture-dealer's craft should have been imported into this country along with European art. Wherever genuine works go, counterfeit work is sure to follow. A number of pictures by foreign artists, said to be original, have lately been sold here, which are gross counterfeits, and we think amateurs should give their attention to the risk they run in purchasing foreign works of art. The circumstances that lead us to caution our readers are as follows. A friend of ours called by invitation on a picture-dealer not long since, who conducts his business in a very private and genteel way. After looking over an assortment of Frères, Lambinets, Plassans, Meissoniers, all "original," he asked for a Delaroche. The dealer summoned a servant, who brought from behind a curtain a small frame, containing a picture the same subject as one in the photographed series of Delaroche's works. In this volume the original picture is set down as in the possession of a certain amateur in France, it being one of the series of sacred subjects which it is well known Delaroche never duplicated. It is not worth while to anticipate a *guess* that the owner might have parted with it.

The next instance is that of a duplicate of one of Frère's works, sold for an original by the same person. That it is a counterfeit is proved by the following extract from a letter by Frère to Mr. Goupil, in Paris.

DIEPPE, 8 July, 1860.

... Eleven years ago I made three *sketches* from my pictures for one of my friends, in whose possession they now are, and except these I have never repeated a single one of my compositions.

Besides other Frères, we have heard of two Meissoniers having been sold in this country, one of which has been seen by a good judge of art and of the works of modern schools, who reports to us that the work is not genuine; the price paid for it was over \$1,000. Other pictures, bearing the names of artists less famous, have been disposed of at various prices, ranging

from \$200 to \$1,000, the originality of which may be questioned likewise. Picture-dealers of this stamp our amateurs know but little of. Responsible dealers can always verify themselves and the works they offer, the same as any other merchant, but this fellow, the travelling genteel dealer, is a kind of commercial eel. He is the cleverest of all knaves, beating the cleverest of Spanish valets. The respect which hedges in the cause of art seems to protect him from ordinary suspicion. He appears like a gentleman in dress and intelligence, and like some of the continental couriers abroad, who protect travellers from trouble and thinking, can make you believe that he follows his pursuit solely through the love of it. This sort of dealer hires and furnishes spacious apartments, displays the paraphernalia of an elegant studio, and manages to impress visitors with a sense of the dignity and refinement of a man of taste. To oblige you, he is willing to exchange pictures, or reserve an example of some master that you may desire to own, as soon as he comes across one; there is no artist who paints but he can procure one of his works, if you will only give him time. All we can say is, look out for him!

Rowse returned from Europe last month. During his stay in England, we understand he made a fine drawing of Professor Owen, and commenced one of Ruskin. The latter is, we believe, unfinished.

LESLIE'S WORKS IN AMERICA.

We are indebted to a friend for the following notes and queries, suggested by Leslie's *Reminiscences*. In O. R. Leslie's *Autobiographical Recollections*, edited by Tom Taylor, on page 215, American edition, the remark is made that the editor has not been able to ascertain where the "Gipsying Party" now is, or how the subject is treated. The picture was, and most likely now is, in the possession of R. Donaldson, Esq., who many years ago lived in State street, N. Y., and removed from thence to Dutchess County. An engraving from it by A. B. Durand was published in an American annual some years ago, impressions of which are now rarely seen.

"Slender with the assistance of Shallow courting Anne Page" (page 263). The editor asks, "was this picture (painted for Sir Willoughby Gordon) engraved for the American Art Union in 1858 (should be 1850), from the collection of Mr. Philip Hone?" At the time Mr. Hone's pictures were sold it was purchased by Mr. John Wolfe, in whose possession it now is, in this city. The engraving alluded to is from this picture. The date inscribed on it is "1825," as it appears etched in the left hand lower corner of the engraving. The same picture was previously engraved for an annual by A. B. Durand. Mr. Durand also engraved for the same purpose, "Sancho before the Duchess," and, if memory serves me, a scene from "Twelfth Night," three figures.

Of Leslie's works, M. J. Danforth, of New York, engraved several. The "Uncle Toby and the Widow Wadman" was engraved by him from the Sheepshank's picture while in London, and was published in 1833. The engraved surface measures 10 by 14½ inches. Copies of it are scarce now. One was given by Leslie himself to Wm. Dunlap, author of the *History of the Arts of Design*, and the same was sold at the sale of Dunlap's effects in 1846, as lot No. 52 of the catalogue. Mr. Danforth executed several plates for annuals,—“Head of Don Quixote” (painted 1827); “Portrait of Washington Irving;” “Girl holding a Dove,” inclosed in an oval, almost a repetition of the upper part of the principal female figure in “The May

Day,” the “rustic beauty of the manor;” (see Introduction, page xx.) “A Portrait,” a lady with lace collar and an ermine trimmed cloak over the left shoulder, roses in her hair and bird in the right hand. Do you or any one of your readers know the name of the fair original?

J. Cheney engraved a female portrait after Leslie in an oval. It appeared in an annual. Whose likeness is it?

George B. Ellis engraved a female with music in her hand standing by a piano. What is the subject from?

Besides the pictures set down in Mr. Taylor's Appendix as owned in New York are there not others? there was a head of the “Witch of Endor” seen here some years ago. Philadelphia and Boston certainly have some of Leslie's works among their art-treasures. Will not some one furnish their titles?

At the proposed Review Exhibition to be held this fall, will it not be possible to bring together all the pictures by Leslie that are within reach on our continent? His early connection with New York seems to make the attempt commendable, and owners of the works can scarcely withhold them if they are applied for by the National Academy of Design. W. C.

THE DIAMOND PALACE.

THE year 1776 will be ever memorable in the annals of mankind as the beginning of a regenerating era of democratic principles and republican government, in place of the long reign of despotism, from Pericles down to George III. A certain document, from the pen of one Jefferson, a Virginian, stated to the world in good English the reasons why certain colonies of the North American continent, disgusted with their king, renounced not only their allegiance to him, but embraced republicanism forever thereafter. Those reasons, although satisfactory to the people after their promulgation, were not in fact the real cause of the Revolution, but rather the effect of the same; that is to say, when the people had revolted, their leaders looked round for good reasons for such an act, and hence the Declaration of Independence.

Those familiar with the occurrences of those days, we have no doubt, will at once refer us to the Boston tea-party, as an act directly due to oppressive taxation without representation, as stated later in the aforesaid declaration. But we can prove that a very large and respectable portion of our own population in this good city of New York, at the present day, whose money is not only spent, but misspent, appropriated, absorbed, or otherwise annihilated in Japanese receptions and similar swindles, by direct taxation, and without a representation in certain primary meetings, do not meditate revolution, but merely shrug their shoulders, and use some such expression as—“Contemptible fellows, these aldermen—disgraceful!”

It is an interesting political question to put forth why moderate taxation for reasonably legitimate purposes should have created a revolution in 1776, while exorbitant taxation for the simple fattening of vulgar aldermen creates nothing but a frown and a laugh in 1860. Yet the reason is very obvious. George III. taxed our ancestors without “by your leave,” and expected them to acknowledge him as their king by the grace of God, and one who could do no wrong. An alderman who robs the public can be treated with contempt, can be trampled under foot (in the papers, morally, of course—not physically, or else an action for assault and battery, etc.), kicked out of office, or what is perhaps worse, made a mayor or Almshouse governor, without having the power to resent it, or without even enlisting the sympathies of a decent citizen—or an indecent one, for

that matter. Kings and aristocracies have to be flattered, admired, served, imitated, worshipped, simply to induce them to tolerate our existence, or perhaps to throw us a crumb from the abundance of the royal manger, or a bit of ribbon to mark us a sheep belonging to the royal flock; while, if disaffected, we have not even the right to grumble, much less the right to abuse them,—as we can an alderman of the present day.

The fact is, in 1776 the American people got tired of fawning to kings and nobles, and of bowing their heads to the worshipful judges, noble governors, excellencies, lords and honorables. They concluded to put an end to all this, and make sovereigns of themselves, and servants of government officers, and hence the Revolution. All men are "born" equal, says the memorable document, and as it is not convenient for us all to be subjects from the want of a king (whom we do not want), let us all be kings, and do without subjects. A capital idea, this,—a state composed of sovereigns of equal rights, and no man obliged to deny his own manhood and sovereignty by fawning to an other!

But what has all this to do with the Diamond Palace, you ask, dear reader? You say, we know all about that story—have heard it in school when we were little boys. To be sure you have, my dear sovereigns; you know all about that, as you know all about everything else, as becomes well-informed kings of the highest order. We only state these facts to show that we also are informed upon the subject, and that we also belong to the governing classes, which means all outside of the Almshouse, the Lunatic Asylum, and other public institutions, of a corrective but nameless nature.

We will presently arrive at the Diamond Palace. When the sovereign people found that to be democratic citizens, kings without subjects, nobles without inferiors, was rather monotonous—though highly moral and strictly republican—they concluded to constitute themselves into a mutual admiration society. Good and evil, greatness and insignificance, are comparative in this mundane sphere, and inasmuch as we, republicans and democrats, could find no inferiors among ourselves, we fell naturally to lauding ourselves (as a nation, not as individuals), and to comparing our excellences with the defects of other nations whenever we possibly could. Sovereigns in a republic require to be tickled—they must be tickled, and by a little stretch of propriety they can be tickled without detriment to natural modesty, and without violence to truth.

It is not surprising that splendid results should follow. A nation of sovereigns, composed of individual sovereigns, may from sheer patriotism constitute itself into a mutual admiration society, in order to exalt the whole by praising its parts. The compliment reacts upon us, and we cannot but be the gainers by it in two ways. In the first place, there is the prize of patronage; in the next place, if we belong to the press, we need not post ourselves on matters of fact—we only need a collection of adjectives expressing excellence, superiority, perfection, surpassing beauty, elegance, righteousness, justice, valor, disinterestedness, patriotism—in fine, everything that is good and great, and our fortune as a journalist is made. If, once in a while, it occurs to us, that from motives of personal animosity, malice, or other natural causes, we are under the painful necessity of attacking an individual (we never attack a community), or his acts, or his works, why then things come quite natural, and we only need to let our tongues run and our pens slide. Elegance and purity of language in praise or abuse would indeed be thrown away. A straw is as good to tickle an individual as

a golden bodkin of the most magnificent kind manufactured for the purpose by the greatest artist. Whoever likes to be tickled is not very particular as to the instrument used, and besides, mediocrity is pleasing and justifiable in a democratic country. Read the accounts in the daily papers of our architectural monuments, from Trinity Church down to Brown's, Jones', or Smith's new residence in the Fifth Avenue, or Snodgrass' new shoe-store. These are all marvels of architecture, unequalled here and elsewhere, now or in times gone by, and, were it not for the immense progress of Yankee enterprise and ingenuity, not to be equalled in the future.

A jewelry firm of this city recently erected a new store, lumbering in outline, shallow in detail—its porch and colonnades below, of the bas-relief kind—backed with heavy rustic ashlar, with square arisses without a molding—stiff and rigid, reminding you of an ice-cream meringue rolled in brown paper. The upper stories are of the later Italian school, but again without expression, without light and shadow—no depth, no warmth, no life—a poem consisting of rhymes selected from a rhyming dictionary, without a word expressive of ideas, and repeating themselves in clumsy sameness, without one point for the eye to rest on or to refresh itself. All this, dear reader, all this, including the counters in the inside, is executed in cold bluish marble, rubbed smooth and polished until every vestige of honest stone-work is obliterated.

Imagine this fabric lined with black furniture and doors and window-sashes, and you have a modern sarcophagus of the latest grief school, for the entombment of jewelry and silverware. But this is not what we wish to dwell upon. You can see it—you cannot miss it in going down Broadway. Two wooden spread eagles, one on the top of the would-be *porte-cochère*, and a larger one on the top of the house, firmly stayed against accidents (such as snow-balls from naughty boys) by undisguised iron rods—the only honest bit of construction in the whole building, and you will at once recognize the theme of the following panegyrics, combined from two daily papers. At variance on most points, even down to depreciation of the families respectively of their editors, the papers marvellously agree in praise of the aforesaid WORK OF ART (?). Not only do both of these noble critics laud to the skies this ponderous satire upon Greece and Rome, but they both use phrases in so doing of such unusual make, metaphors of such cruel construction, facts and fancies worse confounded, and English—(such English! shades of Johnson, Addison, and Webster!—we must include Webster, or Irving, or Cooper—perhaps Everett will do)—that we must come to the sad and discouraging conclusion that the noble editors aforesaid have leased their editorial wand either to the owner, architect, builder, or other individual connected with the building, for the purpose of a gentle puff of a highly enterprising firm in jewelry or architecture, we do not know which. The article begins as follows:

"This new establishment may well be called 'The Diamond Palace of Broadway,' for if the most consummate elegance, united to elaborate decorative skill, have ever culminated in magnificence and beauty, the store is entitled to that high distinction. It may confidently be said, that up to the present time no more gorgeous or elegant building has been erected on Broadway. Indeed, there are many persons who, having been great travellers and good judges, have not hesitated to say that this establishment not only excels all its predecessors in this country in solidity, elegance, and in beauty of decoration, but that there is no similar establishment in the old

world which can in any way vie with its elaborate and artistic arrangement."

As each story of the palace is descanted on, we begin with the main entrance, and follow the writer's lead.

"The main entrance, which faces on Broadway, is a large ebony door, in the midst of Corinthian columns, lighted by immense panes of glass, manufactured in Europe especially for this establishment, and of a size which has never hitherto been imported. Before arriving at the great portal, we meet with a number of octangular, quadrangular, and circular pillars, fluted and embellished in the most exquisite style of sculptural art, and supporting a splendid dome, which only need the figures of Caryatides between the columns to remind us entirely of some of the most elegant Greek forms of architecture. As it is, the Corinthian order is beautifully preserved. The columns supporting the massive dome are of solid marble, arranged in a form so beautiful and so classical that at the first sight they look more like the pillars of the entrance to the ancient Pantheon than to that of a New York Merchant Palace of the present day. The dark woods, resembling ebony, of which the doors and panellings are constructed, are beautifully relieved at equilateral distances by delicate insertions of red sandal wood, polished in the finest style, and sparkling like emeralds in the sun. In the immediate front of the building, surmounted by a gilded eagle, is the name of the firm, plainly but distinctly engraved in the solid stone which forms a part of the main wall. Entering the wide and spacious vestibule which leads into the great emporium of silver, gilt, bronze, and other expensive wares—of which the proprietors of this store have an inexhaustible supply—the beholder is for the moment bewildered by the dazzling display which breaks upon the view. The floor in this department is entirely of marble, beautifully polished, free from any speck, or dirt, or stain, and arranged with a neatness and precision not to be equalled, much less surpassed, in any establishment in this city. In this department there are no less than one dozen of the most elegant marble counters ever constructed. They will be arranged in the prominent parts of the store, where they will doubtless attract great attention. Each of these counters is supported by an ornamented glass case, in which the firm will expose their most elegantly finished articles of *bijouterie*. The great stationary glass cases, which are placed at equi-distant positions on either side of the building, are constructed of *solid ebony*, or rather of a specimen of French wood, carved and polished in the most exquisite style of cabinet workmanship, in *perfect imitation of ebony*, and ornamented with flutings and pendants of the most delicate designs. In these cases a large and splendid variety of silver ware is at present displayed, and the wealthy purchaser who comes in here to make a selection of 'household gods,' will be seriously puzzled as to what good thing he shall take and what he shall leave behind. The great hall will be illuminated at night by twelve massive chandeliers, with triply-decorated ground shades, branches of bronze and gold, and pendants of glittering glass. At present there are only four of these chandeliers in position, but the dazzling appearance of these gives a faint idea of what the united lustre of the full dozen will be. With such a flood of light, flowing from an endless number of gas pipes and tubes, the principal floor of the store will be drowned in brilliancy, rendered doubly attractive by the reflection from the vast number of shining plates in the various stands."

Before ascending into higher regions of this establishment, we pause a moment, as a patriot, to express a regret that the old world should have provided "panes of glass" and "Greek forms of architecture" for this structure. We would also ask if it be too late yet to procure the Caryatides which would so admirably consort with the "Pantheon" entrance to this "Merchant Palace." Could not some fair American form be designed of "solid ebony," or some other "specimen of French wood,"

to fill the office of the Caryatides, which are only needed to perfect the classic elegance of the "Diamond Palace." There is one architectural feature mentioned above, and we are proud to note it, for it is something new, and that is "octangular and quadrangular pillars." These we believe to be perfectly original. There is another idea, too, in the above, which indicates the writer's poetical gifts, namely, the allusion of "wealthy purchasers" going to a "Diamond Palace," to "make a selection of household gods." Let us go up, reader, into the upper stories.

"From this main floor, devoted to the display of watches, jewelry, diamonds, and silver-ware, you are ushered over a flight of marble stairs, whose

'—Light, aerial gallery, golden-railed,
Burns like a fringe of fire.'

between colossal bronze statues, into suites of rooms on the second story. At the foot of these stairs are two life-size bronze statues, elegantly and artistically finished. To attempt to give a description of the rooms into which we are led by these stairs, would be more than useless. Such an agglomeration of beauty, magnificence, wealth and taste, can scarcely be equalled anywhere. Paintings and engravings of the most costly kinds; statues and statuettes, in silver, gold, glass, wax, cork, bronze, plaster, and stone; ornithological groups, combining taste with elegance; illustrations of natural history as rare as beautiful; clocks and watches of every conceivable style of finish, from France, England, Germany and other parts of Europe; Italian paintings, sculptures, and engravings of the most ancient as well as the most modern schools—all these articles of vertu, with thousands of others, are scattered around in the best arrangement, but with a profusion truly wonderful.

"The other three stories, above those already mentioned, are set apart entirely for the operations of the workmen employed in the establishment, whose names are legion. From the third story a spiral staircase leads to the upper parts of the building: but to save time, and to prevent the operatives from being fatigued, they will not be allowed to ascend the staircase leading to the three other stories, but will be propelled upward by an ingenious contrivance, in the short space of forty seconds.

"The upper stories are finished in the florid Italian style. On the summit of the building there is a huge golden eagle, about eight feet high, and measuring the same length from the tip of the wings—the ancient symbol of the firm above-named—the wings contrasting with the gleaming marble below, as did the gold-tinted locks of one of Phidias's statues with the snowy brow of the ensculptured goddess. A large flag-staff will be raised at its side, whence the American flag will proudly float. An eagle of lesser size surmounts the porch itself—a smaller eagle of the same pattern—the same bird, with the addition of a new coat of feathers, that has guarded the entrance to the firm's old store for twenty years."

We have been told, since this notice appeared, that the Insurance companies, which have very prosy magnates, excited by the fiery poetic allusions to the stairs, notified the proprietors that they must increase the premium. It is said, furthermore, that eight of the twelve chandeliers which were expected to drown the building in brilliancy, have been dispensed with in deference to advice from the same quarter. Another point in the above description strikes us as an original feature in this building, namely, that ingenious and humane contrivance for propelling the operatives upward. What is it? We proceed to the concluding paragraphs.

"Of all the stately structures, magnificent in their white beauty and solid strength, which have leaped into existence on each side of our great thoroughfare at the waving of the Money King's wand,

none has equalled the new diamond and jewelry store above described, and so purely classic; each of its columns is a thing of beauty, with chiselled plinth, abacus, pedestal, capital, and shaft. Passing beneath the dome, and through the great ebony door—lighted by panes of glass whose like in size and quality New York has never before imported—to the stainless floor of the first story, you are dazzled at once by a maze of marble counters, glass cases, and mirrors, massive chandeliers in bronze and gold, with glittering pendants; by the gleam, glare, and star-shine, which make the scene more like the interior of the Arabic Cave of Lustre than the five-story trading-place of a modern American firm.

"Perhaps no building has been erected in our city, since the custom-house was built of solid granite in every part, which is so well calculated, from the massiveness of its foundations and the thickness of its walls, to resist fire, burglars, and the ravages of time, as the magnificent structure we here describe. And yet, with all the depth of vault, and ponderous inner safes, it is so fairly fashioned without and within, that its great strength and solidity are lost sight of, and the whole effect produced on the eye of the beholder is that of an airy, magical structure, the abode of the sylphs and the gnomes, which may dissolve like the phantasma of a cabalistic mirror when the hair that holds the keystone is snapt in twain."

There is nothing particular to comment on in the above, after getting over the phenomenon of a hair holding up a keystone, except the ingenious qualification of beauty as *white*. We think that a clever hit in these times, but not a fair one, considering the tender state of the public mind. We dare not dwell on it, lest we should bring ourselves into trouble. Excessively white beauty we know to be blinding, and we have no doubt it is the cause of an optical delusion in leading the writer to mention the custom-house as built of *granite*.

GLEANINGS AND ITEMS.

We take the following article, headed "Two Theories of Journalism," from the National Intelligencer, published, as our readers know, at Washington. It is not often that the Press criticises itself. When such instances of self-examination occur, such as may be termed confessions, thoughtful observers should ponder over them.

TWO THEORIES OF JOURNALISM.

Our young and able New York contemporary, the World, in some complimentary allusions to this journal in respect to the *quality* of its contents, takes exceptions, at the same time, to the theory on which its editorial columns are conducted so far as relates to the *small amount* of "leading articles" daily served up to its readers. To this purport that journal remarks as follows:

The Intelligencer has made it its chief aim to furnish its readers with correct information and sound views, and has always seemed quite as willing to give these in the productions of others as in the form of editorial articles. But a moderate amount of editorial matter has usually appeared in its ample columns. It has always published all important public documents, and all important letters and speeches by distinguished public men of both political parties while there were but two, and of all parties since. It has thus never failed to supply its readers with the materials for forming an intelligent judgment of public affairs. Whenever it has found anything that is pertinent to present questions, and well put, in a contemporary journal, it has manifested an unaffected pleasure in copying it, often introducing it with pleasant and courteous words of commendation. Never envious of its contemporaries, it has always seemed anxious that its own readers should appreciate their merits.

With all this integrity, dignity, candor, considerateness and generous courtesy, if the Intelligencer has failed in anything, it has been in the meagreness of its own discussions of public measures. It has presumed too much on the mental activity of its readers, and on the intelligent interest they ought to feel in public questions. The mass of men wish their newspaper to think for them. Their powers of independent thought are expended on their business, which engrosses most of their time, and leaves them only snatches of leisure to glance through the columns of a newspaper. The market reports, prices of stocks, and other commercial intelligence, are perused with a thoughtful view to the advantage they can take of it in

conducting their own affairs. They skim through other matters, because they do not wish to be wholly without ideas on topics which are on everybody's tongue. They do not care enough about these topics to go into them with any great care. They have no use for them except for the casual conversation of the day. They wish to know what they ought to think of them at some cheaper rate than a laborious reading of documents and comparison of views. Hence the demand for leading articles, which enable the readers of a journal to see at once what are the most salient features of the last day's occurrences, and to learn, without much trouble, what is thought of them by men who surrender all their time to their study.

Without questioning at all the justice of our contemporary's observations in regard to the readers for whom it is called to cater in a city like New York, we may be permitted to suggest that it has possibly made a hasty induction, from a partial view of the facts involved, when it proceeds to infer that the rule prescribed to itself must needs be of universal application in the field of journalism. It may be that the mass of men in the great and busy Commercial Metropolis "wish their newspaper to think for them," and are accustomed, after the careful and thoughtful study of market reports, prices of stocks, and commercial intelligence, "to skim through other matters because they do not wish to be wholly without ideas on topics which are on everybody's tongue." We can easily understand how it is that men absorbed in the pursuit of wealth, or pre-occupied by the cares and dissipations of a great city, should lack "the mental activity" which excites in others more favorably situated the "intelligent interest" every citizen ought to feel in public questions concerning the welfare and honor of the country. We know full well that the man of business who is *only* "a man of business," or the sated worldling who values the newspaper merely for its chronicle of current events, does not think highly enough of "important public documents," "important letters," or "speeches delivered by distinguished public men of all parties," to "go into them with any great care." It is very natural that such people should have "no use for these matters except for the casual conversation of the day;" and having no ideas of their own, it is best, perhaps, all things considered, that they should think in the words of their newspaper; and wishing, as they do, to know what they ought to think on such recondite topics, "at some cheaper rate than a laborious reading of documents and comparison of views," they doubtless stand in need of "leading articles" to conduct them by a royal road to the facile conclusions of their editorial preceptor. We could wish that all such persons were fortunate enough in taking their ideas at second-hand, to have in all cases an instructor so competent, reliable and conscientious as our New York contemporary.

Yet we think, after all allowances are made for the necessities entailed by readers of this class, there still remains "a more excellent way" for such journals as are called, in considering the taste and capacity of their patrons, to fill another sphere and perform another function. Impossible as it may seem to the denizens of the crowded city, there is a large and respectable body of their countrymen who are not addicted to swear in the words of any master, and who, having the requisite leisure and "mental activity" for political studies, are accustomed to read with care and intelligent interest the "public documents" and other papers known to be essential to the formation of sound and deliberate judgments. For such the views of the editor are rather of secondary than of primary importance, as it often happens that readers of this class bring to the subject in hand an intelligence far superior to that possessed by most of those who preside over the columns of American journals. The opinions of the editor should not, indeed, be withheld on any public question, even though he may have furnished all the materials necessary for forming an intelligent judgment of public affairs; for such opinions may often be instructive from the light in which public questions are differently viewed by different minds, or may at least possess that lower interest which attaches to the community of thought discovered by the reflection and embodiment of similar ideas upon the same subject-matters.

If these views are correct, as we think they will be admitted to be in regard to such readers as we have indicated, it follows, without the necessity of formal inference, that all writing merely for the sake of writing is impertinent to the function of a journal which is called to furnish facts and arguments to the studious and thoughtful, rather than the superficial "skimings" and impressions designed for those who "have no use for them except for the casual conversation of the day."

To multiply words without conveying positive knowledge is to insult the reader's intelligence, and at the same time has for its inevitable effect to inspire him with indifference and contempt for the "leading matter" which, from previous and repeated experience, he has found to be little more than a flat and idle reflection of "the last day's occurrences," often as purposeless in point of dignity as they are groundless in point of fact. Where a certain number of "editorial columns" are appointed to be filled every day with "original matter" of some sort upon subjects of some kind, and where of course the same space and prominence are given to the "lessons of the day," whatever they may be, the reader soon learns to rate these lessons at their average value, which, from the necessity of the case, not being very high, tends to impair the influence of the editor, whenever, being called to treat a high theme, he would desire to secure for his observations the special attention to which they may be entitled in consideration of their importance, but which they are little likely to receive at the hands of readers who have come to perceive that their editorial teacher measures his lucubrations according to the length of his columns and the width of his sheet, rather than the height of his argument and the breadth of his views.

While, then, we do not deny that to a journal situated like our New York contemporary, there may be sufficient reasons why it should have daily articles for the amusement of the listless, and for the information of those whose "powers of independent thought are expended on their business," we may be permitted to suggest that readers of another class demand a different regimen in proportion to their capacity for another species of diet. So long as any considerable number of men shall be found to possess the requisite leisure for political studies, whether they be private citizens anxious to discharge with intelligence and fidelity the measure of their civil obligations, or politicians and statesmen aiming to fill with dignity and usefulness their place in public stations, we suppose there will be a demand for just such "important documents," "letters" and "speeches" as readers of another kind find it more convenient to "skim through," in the shape of compends, summaries and abstracts, prepared by those whose professional task it is to provide for the large class who are unable or unwilling to "seek the fountains," a stock of ideas gotten at second-hand, but large enough for "the casual conversation of the day"—that being, according to the World, all the "use" which such unfortunates have for topics demanding patient study and independent investigation.

We would add but one thought to this able discussion. It has been asserted that a distinctive evil of the old Church was its self-appointed function of thinking and judging for the mass of men. We would ask, considering the trials and tribulations mankind has undergone in opposing that evil, whether the theory that "The mass of men wish their newspaper to think for them" is to be accepted as the reformed practice of an "intelligent community"—whether the old idea is to be clothed in a new dress? We indorse the World's opinion of the *Intelligencer* as among newspapers one that most deserves credit for "integrity, dignity and candor," and its desire to "furnish its readers with correct information and sound views."

OBITUARY.

VICTOR G. AUDUBON.—Victor G. Audubon, the eldest son of the distinguished naturalist, died on the seventeenth of last month, at his late residence, Fort Washington. Several years ago Mr. Audubon stood before our community as an artist of note; his works, drawn and painted with remarkable accuracy, are engraved in the volumes on the Birds and Quadrupeds of this country undertaken by his father. He painted but little of late years, if at all, none of his works having been on exhibition that we can call to mind. Mr. Audubon was an esteemed member of the National Academy of Design, and in every social relation with his brother artists a reliable friend and a sympathetic and earnest co-laborer. We are indebted to a friend for the following particulars of Mr. Audubon's career.

"V. G. Audubon was born at Louisville, Kentucky, June 29, 1809, being the son of John J. and Lucy Audubon. His early childhood was passed in Henderson, Kentucky, where, in many long rambles with his father, he learned to love nature. He began to draw very early, practising in the schools of those days from engraved heads and figures, the best models to copy the times afforded. From one of these drawings, 'The Judgment of Solomon,' he was at a subsequent period admitted into the British Academy at London, to develop his talents to a higher standard. Pecuniary misfortunes happening to his father, young Audubon was obliged to abandon this pleasant occupation and resort to commerce. He was placed as a junior clerk in a large mercantile house in Louisville, where, in a few years, he became the confidential and corresponding clerk of the house. He was greatly esteemed, and probably would have become a reputable merchant in his native town had not his father risen to fame and again become prosperous, requiring his son's services to manage the business affairs appertaining to the publication of his great work on Natural History. Victor was accordingly sent to London in the fall of 1832, where he took charge of the publication of 'Birds of America.' His time not being wholly absorbed by business, he passed his leisure hours in the study of painting, music, and the German language, relieving the labor of study with the charms of a delightful society into which his father's letters introduced him. John Wilson, the painter, gave Victor lessons in landscape, and Stanfield was his friend and critic, favoring him with his own studies to copy. In company with other students of art, he made the tour of Wales, Cumberland, and the Highlands of Scotland, finishing his rambles with a tour on the continent, the whole consuming seven happy, profitable years of his life. He now returned home. This year, 1840, he visited his father's old friend, Dr. Bachmann, of Charleston, South Carolina, whose second daughter he married. This lady did not long survive the marriage. Mr. Audubon settled in New York, in 1843, marrying his second wife, Miss Mallory, and thereafter devoting himself wholly to business as a publisher of the Quadrupeds of America. Of this work he painted the trees, plants, and backgrounds generally to the finished animals, besides attending to all the business connected with the developments of natural history, in which his father had been engaged. Mr. Audubon was intimate with many distinguished artists, and brother naturalists, and was highly esteemed by them. He was even in temper, firm in disposition, and at times sparkling in wit, but never boisterous: he was, besides, remarkable for his skill in manly exercises. His death took place on the 17th of August, after a long and

painful series of paralytic strokes: his remains are interred in Trinity Cemetery."

JOSEPH C. WELLS. We are pained to record the death of Joseph C. Wells, a prominent architect of this city, which event took place in July last, on board of one of the English steamers bound for Liverpool. Mr. Wells was on his way to his native land for the benefit of his health, and died two hours before the vessel touched its shores. Mr. Wells was born in England, which country he left about eighteen years ago, to pursue his profession of an architect in this country. Having undergone the usual thorough training of an English architectural student, he was able soon after his arrival to show his qualifications, and prove their value to the community. He easily found discriminating patrons, for whom he erected residences remarkable for domestic conveniences and good taste, evincing ability in this line, which led to his employment on commissions of greater importance. Besides constructing many beautiful residences in this city, he built several of the public edifices that contribute to its architectural adornment. Of these, we would mention Dr. Phillips' church, in the Gothic style, on the Fifth Avenue, and the ornate building No. 112 Broadway, and the marble stores on the corner of Broadway and Pearl street. Mr. Wells lately erected a court-house at Wilkesbarre, Penn., which, we believe, has given great satisfaction to the legal profession of that place, besides several villas on the banks of the Hudson, on Staten Island, and in Berkshire Co., Mass., all of them, as monumental structures, illustrating the powers of a genuine artist in the union of beauty, utility, sound construction and economy.

Mr. Wells not only enjoyed the respect of his professional brethren on account of his ability, but also their warm regard for his social qualities. This feeling was shared by all who came in contact with him. Mr. Wells filled several offices of honor in various societies in this city, taking an active interest in their prosperity almost up to the day of his death. He was a member of the American Institute of Architects, holding the office of Treasurer, and, we believe, was lately President of the St. George Society. The architectural profession lose a valuable member, and the country one who has done much to make the land we live in more comfortable and more beautiful by art than it was before he entered it.

Literary Record.

MODERN PAINTERS, by John Ruskin. Smith, Elder & Co., London. 5 vols. illustrated.

Had Mr. Ruskin written this treatise on Modern Painters for fame, confining himself to one volume as he intimates he might have done, in the preface of the fifth volume, the reviewer would have had an easy and a pleasant task; he would not have been obliged to consider whether Mr. Ruskin is or is not qualified to treat twenty subjects instead of two. In this treatise on Modern Painters Mr. Ruskin has not confined his thoughts to Turner or even to art as he set out to do; on the contrary he has brought in theological, philosophical, moral, scientific and social problems, and in most cases in a way unconnected with art. Independently of their relation to art, he has treated these grave subjects in such a superficial manner as to repel many readers, and greatly mar, with others, the effect of what he has wisely said in behalf of his leading subject.

Modern Painters is justly pronounced to be anything but a well-considered work. It lacks unity of thought and precision of treatment. On finishing the last volume, we came to the conclusion that we must accept the work as an eloquent rhapsody—an odd combination of knowledge and nonsense. That the work is in some respects a valuable contribution to art literature no one can deny. Take a summary of that part of Modern Painters which may be held as Mr. Ruskin's best directed labor, consisting of certain geological, botanical and atmospheric facts, the result of his own observation, and which, being recorded from an artistic point of view, may be accepted as original matter in art literature. We would instance a portion of Volume III., including the chapters on Fields and Rocks; a still larger portion of Volume IV., embracing the chapters headed Materials of Mountains, Sculpture of Mountains, and the chapters on Forms embracing Aiguilles, Crests, Precipices, Banks, and Stones, and in the last volume the chapters on the Bud, Leaf, Branch, Stem, and the part devoted to Clouds. Most of this matter is new and useful, and if it could have been put in one or two volumes the work would have been unexceptionable; it may through courtesy be styled the scientific department of Mr. Ruskin's labor.

There is another useful branch of Mr. Ruskin's labor to notice, the descriptive part. As a popularizer of art and nature, he has wielded the poet's descriptive powers advantageously. Starting with a peculiar sympathy for certain aspects of the beautiful, though cramped by a narrow moral nature, and adding to this a literary training which enables him to manage the English language with great effect, he has made some dull people see both nature and art that never saw either before. In this field, as well as in that of his scientific labor, Mr. Ruskin has performed excellent service. He has established himself as a descriptive poet, if a prose writer may be called such; and had he possessed a different temperament, he might be ranked as a prose counterpart of Wordsworth. These two features of Mr. Ruskin's ability, the scientific and descriptive portions of Modern Painters, constitute in our judgment nearly all there is of value in the work to the literature of art.

Of Mr. Ruskin's theory of the Beautiful, or what he puts down in the second volume of Modern Painters under the heading of "Ideas of Beauty," we have but little to say. His system must take its place with the systems of other metaphysicians, and be judged accordingly. Or it must be accepted on the ground lately advanced in behalf of a new dictionary, that it must be the best because the last one out. We fancy that all the systems of Beauty that have hitherto been elaborated will disappear like chaff before the wind when the researches now being made in psychology shall be matured and shaped into principles of rational application. There is no system, ancient or modern, so good as to be of absolute authority, and none so poor as not to be of service to those who can understand it. All that can be said of Beauty is that it is mysteriously the child of the True and the Good, and that in art its loveliest and purest aspects depend upon the highest expression of all its elements. The judge of the quality of Beauty is not one man or one age; but rather a jury composed of a few in every age. So far as Mr. Ruskin is concerned, he seems to have a clearer perception of the Sublime than of the Beautiful in the phenomena of nature; he enjoys that evidently. He appears to be insensible to the tender eloquence of profound emotion, and blind to the attributes of supreme loveliness.